

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 L-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 251444Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3289

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1541

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, RO, PLO

SUBJ: CEAUSESCU VISIT TO SYRIA

REF:BUCHAREST 1789

1. CEAUSESCU'S OVERNIGHT VISIT TO SYRIA APRIL 24-25
WAS ARRANGED ON VERY SHORT NOTICE WITH ROMANIAN
AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY RECEIVING THE STIMULATED SYRIAN
"INVITATION" TO VISIT ONLY AT MID-MORNING APRIL 24. TWO
PRESIDENTS MET IN PRIVATE FOR THREE HOURS AND ASAD GAVE
DINNER IN CEASUSCU'S HONOR.

2. SYRIAN PRESS APRIL 25 HEADLINED VISIT WITH PARTIC-
ULAR EMPHSIS ON EXCHANGE OF REMARKS AT DINNER. PRESIDENT
ASAD SPOKE WARMLY IN HIS EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS ABOUT
CEAUSESCU PERSONALLY AND EXCELLENT STATE OF SYRIAN-
ROMANIAN RELATIONS. CEAUSESCU IN TURN PRAISED
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EXCELLENT BILATERAL REALTIONS AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT

FOR INTENSIFIED EFFORTS TOWARD PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST, STATING THERE WERE "NUMERIOUS WAYS TO REACH THIS RESULT." HE CALLED FOR ENLARGING NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN GENEVA CONFERENCE AND EMPHASIZED THAT ROMANIA CONSIDERED ELEMENTS OF JUST PEACE TO INCLUDE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL ARAB LANDS OCCUPIED IN 1967 AND ESTABLISHING INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. SAID HE AND ROMANIAN PEOPLE WOULD WORK WITH SYRIANS AND OTHER PEOPLES OF AREA TO BRING ABOUT JUST AND DURABLE PEACE WHICH WOULD ENSURE NATIONAL UNITY, SECURITY, AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL COUNTRIES IN AREA.

3. CEAUSESCU ALSO MET WITH PLO CHAIRMAN ARAFAT DURING EVENING APRIL 24 BUT PRESS GAVE NO DETAILS.

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO INSIDE INFORMATION TO OFFER AS TO REASONS FOR CEAUSESCU'S HASTILY ARRANGED VISIT. OCCURRING AS IT DID IN MIDST OF INTENSIFIED INTRA-ARAB DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS AND SOVIET ME INITIATIVES, IT PROBABLY REPRESENTS CEAUSESCU'S BID TO CARVE OUT A USEFUL ROLE FOR ROMANIA IN ME SETTLEMENT PROCESS WHETHER AT GENEVA OR IN OTHER FORUMS. DESPITE SHORT NOTICE, SYRIAN WELCOME WAS GENUINE, AND VISIT AT LEAST SERVED TO HIGHLIGHT THAT SYRIAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS ARE CURRENTLY ON FRIENDLY AND SOUND BASIS.
MURPHY

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